

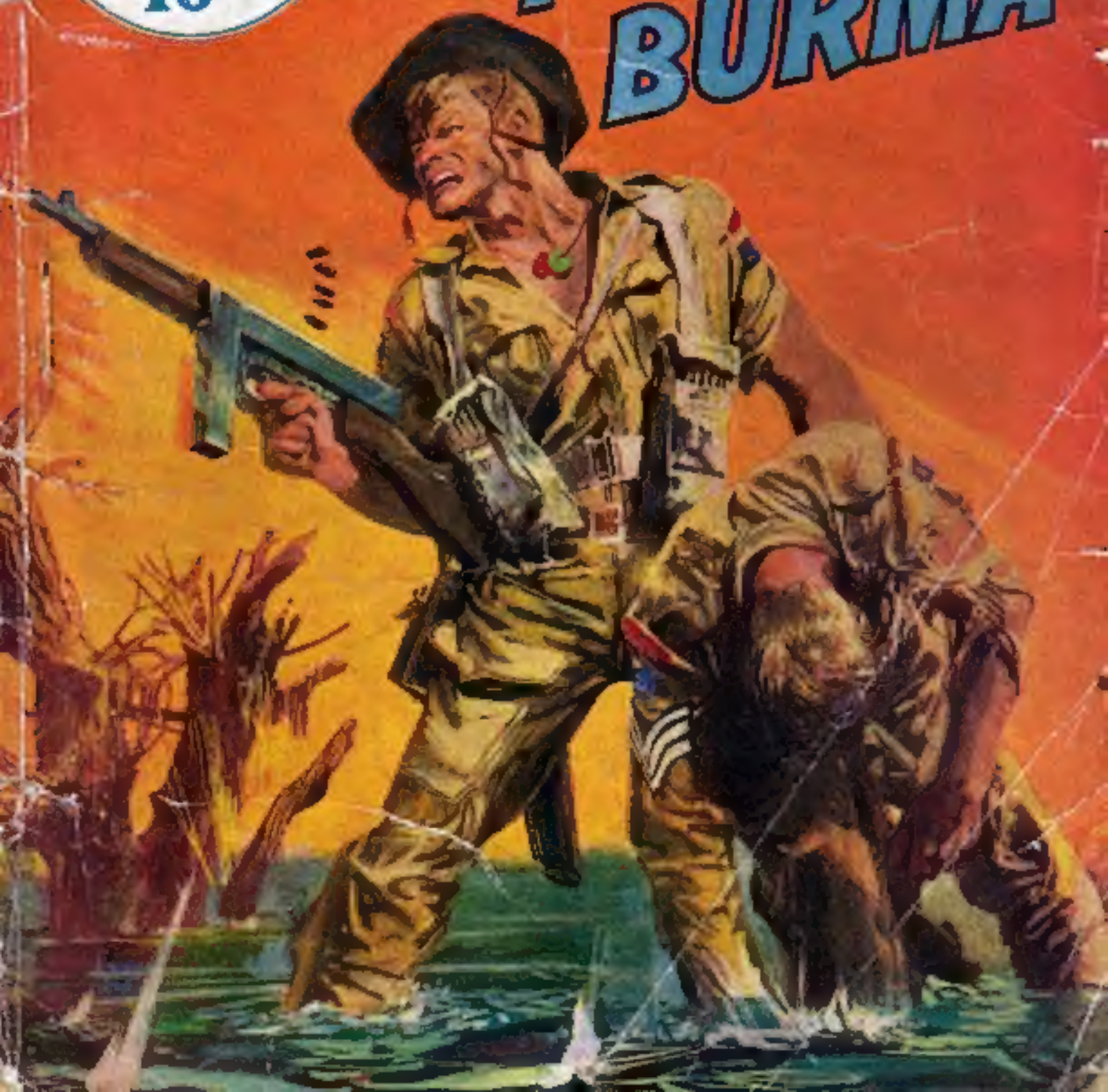
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# SPECIAL FORCE BURMA

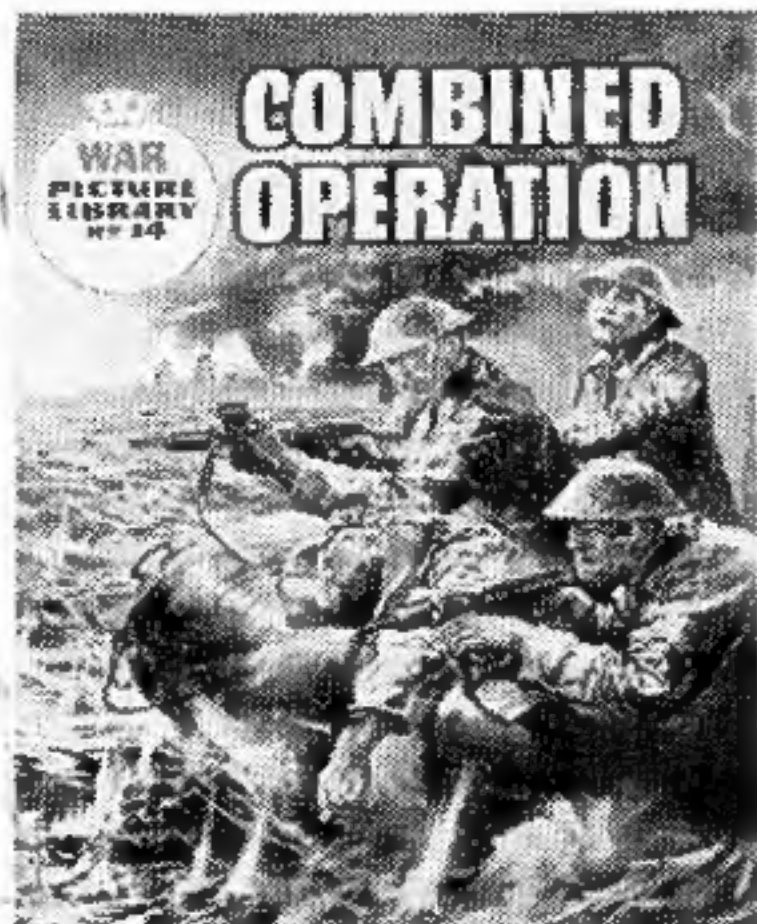


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# SPECIAL FORCE BURMA

BY THE JANUARY OF 1944 THE FLIGHT OF THE XIVTH ARMY, FIGHTING VALIANTLY IN BURMA, WAS DESPERATE. AFTER GRUELLING MONTHS OF INCESSANT ATTACKS BY JAPANESE FORCES, OUR WEARY SOLDIERS BEGAN FALLING BACK ACROSS THE RIVER CHINDWIN. OUTNUMBERED BY THE SAVAGELY FANATICAL HORDES OF THE LITTLE YELLOW MEN OF NIPPON, THE TROOPS GRUDGINGLY GAVE GROUND.



TORN, MAIMED AND DYING FROM A NIGHTMARE JUNGLE CAMPAIGN THEY NEVERTHELESS WITHDREW ACROSS THE RIVER WITH THAT CALM ORDER WHICH HAS ALWAYS MARKED THE BRITISH SOLDIER IN A TIGHT CORNER

# Chapter 1. JUNGLE MISSION

THE CROSSING SUCCESSFULLY CARRIED OUT, OUR SOLDIERS, WITH NERVES STRAINED AND PHYSICAL ENDURANCE AT BREAKING POINT, NOW HAD TO ENDURE PERSISTENT "JITTER-ATTACKS" BY JAP PATROLS, STEALING ACROSS THE RIVER UNDER COVER OF THE BLACK JUNGLE NIGHT.

YOOHOO! YOU  
DIE, JOHNNY!  
YOU DIE,  
TONIGHT!

DON'T CALL  
BACK OR MOVE,  
OR YOU'LL GIVE  
OUR POSITIONS  
AWAY!

ONE SUCH JAP ATTACK COLLIDED ONE NIGHT WITH A PARTY OF SPECIALLY-TRAINED JUNGLE FIGHTERS OF THE SPECIAL FORCE, AS THEY WERE CALLED. THE LEADER OF THIS PARTY WAS CAPTAIN ROD RANSOME. HIS TASK THAT NIGHT WAS TO OUT-JAP A JAP PATROL AND BRING IN A PRISONER, AND IT LOOKED AS IF HIS LUCK WAS IN.

YOOHOO,  
JOHNNY~~YOU  
LIKE KUPATEE?

HE'S MY CUPPA  
TEA, ALL RIGHT,  
THE LITTLE  
YELLOW APE!



BY JEERING AT THE BRITISH, THE JAPS HOPED TO PROVOKE THEM INTO GIVING AWAY THEIR POSITION. BUT RANSOME AND HIS MEN OF THE SPECIAL FORCE WERE AS WILY AS THE CREEPING ENEMY. WHILE THE OTHERS MADE FOR THE TREES, RANSOME SECURED A FLASHLIGHT TO A HIDDEN TRIP WIRE.

THIS SWINGING FLASHLIGHT OUGHT TO DRAW THE LITTLE SO-AND-SO'S!

RANSOME PULLED HIMSELF INTO A TREE, LEAVING THE FLASHLIGHT SWINGING LIKE A PENDULUM. THE JAPS' CURIOSITY WOULD DO THE REST.

THE JAPS WILL THINK IT'S SOMEONE LOOKING FOR THEM WITH A LIGHT!

THEY HAD TO WAIT SO LONG THAT RANSOME THOUGHT THE JAPS HAD GONE HOME. BUT SUDDENLY SHADOWY FIGURES APPEARED FROM NOWHERE. THEIR LEADER GRASPED THE TORCH AND .....



...A BLINDING MAGNESIUM FLARE, SET OFF BY TRIP WIRE, BETRAYED THE SKULKING JAPS TO THE BRITISH STEN GUNS WHICH RIDDED THEM IN ONE CONCERTED ROAR OF FLAME AND LEAD.

SORRY, LITTLE MAN, BUT WE WANT TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS!





GRIMLY SATISFIED WITH THEIR NIGHT'S WORK, THE BRITISH PARTY RETURNED TO THEIR FIELD H.Q. WHERE RANSOME PUSHED HIS CAPTIVE BEFORE COLONEL PINDER, COMMANDING THE SPECIAL FORCE.

HERE YOU ARE, COLONEL -- ONE SPECIMEN PRISONER, AND I THINK HE'LL TALK.

GOOD WORK, RANSOME! WE'LL GET CAPTAIN WELLS HERE TO ACT AS INTERPRETER.

COLONEL PINDER PUT HIS QUESTIONS SO ARTFULLY THAT THE JAP ACTUALLY BECAME BOASTFUL, WHICH WAS PRECISELY WHAT THE COLONEL WANTED.

HE'S VERY ANNOYED AT THE WAY YOU POOH-POOH THE IMPERIAL JAP ARMY. HE SAYS THEY'RE BUILDING UP ALL ALONG THE RIVER BANK FOR A GRAND OFFENSIVE. AND IF WE DON'T BELIEVE HIM, WE CAN SEE ALL THE RAFTS BEING CONCENTRATED UP-RIVER.



FIRST THING NEXT MORNING, ROD RANSOME WENT TO THE AIRFIELD AT IMPHAL AND ARRANGED WITH AN R.A.F. FRIEND TO TAKE HIM ON A RECCE FLIGHT UP THE CHINDWIN RIVER. FOR THE FIRST MILES OF FLYING, NOTHING OF THE ENEMY COULD BE SEEN -- ONLY THE DENSE CARPET OF JUNGLE ON EITHER SIDE.

I DON'T SEE ANY RAFTS, ROD.

LET'S HAVE A DEKKO UP THERE WHERE THE RIVER FORKS, JIM





SKIMMING LOW WHERE THE RIVER FORKED NEAR HOMALIN, ROD WAS REWARDED BY THE SIGHT OF A MASS OF RAFTS CLEVERLY CAMOUFLAGED UNDER THE BUSHES. SO IT WAS TRUE -- THE JAPANESE CROSSING WAS IMMINENT, AND THERE WAS NO TIME TO LOSE!



SPEEDING BACK TO THE AIRFIELD, RANSOME FOUND COLONEL PINDER WAITING FOR HIS INFORMATION.



SWIFTLY RANSOME SELECTED FOUR MEN OF THE SPECIAL FORCE AND ONE MAN OF THE BURMESE RIFLES, CORPORAL CHANGI. WHILE THEY LISTENED TO THEIR BRIEFING, THEY PACKED THEIR SPECIAL JUNGLE KIT AND RATIONS, AND EXPERTLY CHECKED THEIR WEAPONS -- STEN GUNS, GRENADES, AMMUNITION AND JUNGLE KNIVES.



AS SOON AS IT'S DARK WE'LL PUSH OFF DOWN HERE. THE RAFTS ARE WHERE THIS CROSS IS AT THE TOP -- A DISTANCE OF FIFTY MILES. CORPORAL CHANGI WILL NAVIGATE AND CORPORAL BARNES TAKES CARE OF THE EXPLOSIVES. LITTLE JAPS HAVE BIG EARS, SO MUFFLE YOUR PADDLES AND SPEAK ONLY IF YOU HAVE TO.

TRUST ME TO CLICK FOR THE EXPLOSIVES!

WAITING FOR THE COVER OF NIGHT, RANSOME'S PARTY PREPARED TO LEAVE ON THEIR DARING MISSION. COLONEL PINDER HAD A FEW LAST WORDS TO SAY ...

THE DESTRUCTION OF THOSE RAFTS WILL BAULK THE ENEMY INVASION AND GIVE OUR TROOPS A BADLY NEEDED BREATHER. THEY RELY ON YOU, RANSOME, SO DON'T FAIL THEM. GOOD LUCK!

THANK YOU, SIR. WE'LL DO OUR DARNEST!





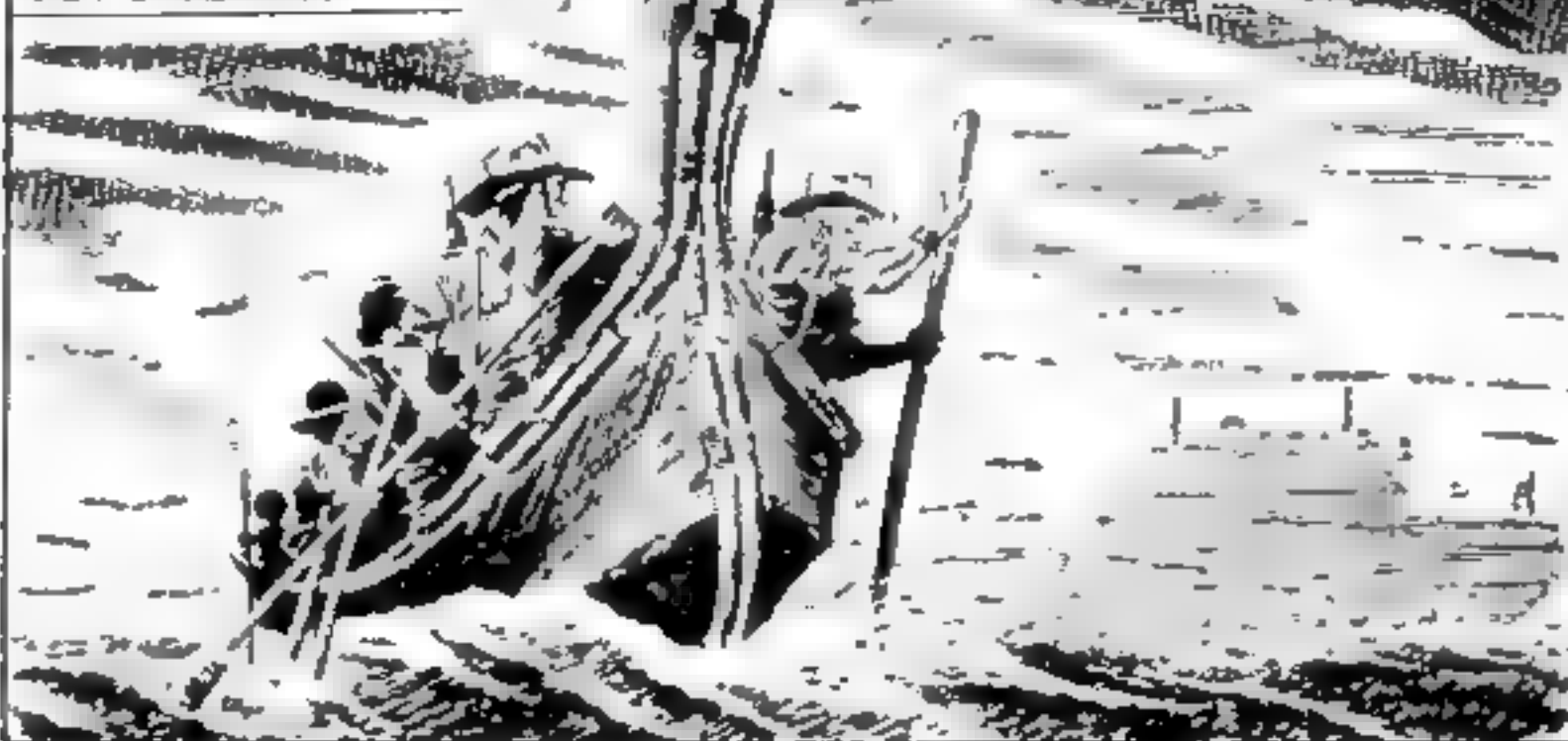
HOW HANSOME MADE ONE LAST QUICK CHECK OVER A SHOULDER THEN THEY STARTED, STEERING NEAR TO THEIR OWN BANK WHERE THE CURRENT WAS NOT SO STRONG. WITH MANDIBLES MUFFLED WITH CLOTH, THEY SLIPPED THROUGH THE WATER IN A WRAITHLIKE SILENCE.



HALF AN HOUR OF PADDLING AND THEY HAD A SHOCK AS A JAPANESE RIVER PATROL BOAT LOOMED OUT OF THE GLOOM. HANSOME HAD TO MAKE UP HIS MIND QUICKLY.



MORE BY EXAMPLE THAN SPOKEN COMMAND, RANSOME MADE THEM PADDLE FOR THE L. V. S., EXPECTING ANY SECOND TO HAVE A STREAM OF BULLETS RIPPING THEM APART, BUT THE FRIENDLY MIST SWALLOWED THEM, LEAVING THE JAP BOAT TO PASS ASTERN WITHOUT ANY SIGN OF ALARM.



WITH EVERY SENSE ALERT THEY PADDLED ON THROUGH THE NIGHT AND WITH THE LOAMING OF DAYLIGHT HID UP ON THE BANK, NOT DARING TO SHOW THEMSELVES TO HIDDEN ENEMY EYES ON THE FAR SIDE.

IF I'VE GOT TO LUG THIS DARN BOX OF EXPLOSIVES EVERY TIME WE MAKE CAMP, I'LL MOVE TO ENJOY MYSELF.

OHAY, JACKSON, YOU GO ON WITH CORPORAL FLINT, AND TELL BARNES NOT TO MAKE CAMP TOO FAR FROM THE BOAT. I'LL HELP CORPORAL CHANCE HERE WITH THE BOAT. SEE YOU LATER.

NEVER HAPPY UNLESS YOU'RE BINDING ABOUT SOMETHING. EN. BARNES



CARRYING THE COOKING UTENSILS, THE SCOTTISH CORPORAL FLINT CARELESSLY STEPPED IN A CLEAR PATCH WHERE THE SUN, GLINTING ON A PAN, CAUGHT THE ATTENTION OF A JAP GUN BATTERY. AT ONCE THE ENEMY OPENED FIRE

SCATTER!  
THEY'VE SPOTTED  
US!



RAMSOME AND CORPORAL CHANGI WERE BARFLY UP THE BANK WHEN A SECOND SALVO FROM THE ENEMY BATTERY CRASHED ABOUT THE BOAT.

THAT'S DONE THE  
BOAT A BIT OF  
NO GOOD, CHANGI.

YOU SPEAK  
TRUTHFULLY,  
SAHIB AND MUCH  
EQUIPMENT, TOO.



WHEN THE FIRING CEASED, ROD RANSOME CALLED HIS MEN TO THE BOAT WHICH THEY FOUND DAMAGED BEYOND REPAIR. STORES AND AMMUNITION WERE MISSING, TOO.

THE BOAT'S A COMPLETE WRITE-OFF. GET THE EQUIPMENT UP THE BANK AND LET IT GO--AND MIND YOU'RE NOT SEEN.

AIN'T YOU GLAD YOU TOOK THE EXPLOSIVES, BARNES?

MAYBE I AM, MISTER STOKES


ROD DECIDED THERE WAS NOTHING FOR IT BUT TO MAKE A RAFT, AND THIS COST THEM MANY PRECIOUS HOURS. BUT TWO HOURS LATER, THEY WERE ABLE TO MAKE A FRESH START. THE THING THAT WORRIED THE CAPTAIN NOW WAS THE LOSS OF RAT AND KIT THROUGH THE SHELING. NEITHER WAS HE HAPPY ABOUT THE NEW RAFT WHICH SLEWED ERRATICALLY IN THE CURRENT.

THE RAFT, LADSB-- SHE WILL NOT ANSWER TO MY STEERING!

OKAY, CHANGE! TRY TO KEEP TOGETHER MORE, LADS!



BUT DESPITE THEIR STRIVING,  
THE RAFT WAS NO MATCH  
FOR THE CURRENT WHICH  
SWUNG THEM EVER NEARER  
TO THE ENEMY SHORE.



THIS RAFT IS  
USELESS. WE'LL  
HAVE TO JUMP ON  
TO THE ENEMY BANK.

WITH STRAINING HERULES, YET THANKFUL  
ONCE AGAIN FOR THE FRIENDLY MIST,  
THEY RUMPTED INTO THE BANK AND CREEPT  
ASHORE WITHOUT BEING SEEN. PAUSING  
ONLY TO ADJUST THEIR LOADS, THEY  
FOLLOWED CAPTAIN RANSOME INTO THE  
PROTECTIVE CLOAK OF THE JUNGLE.



MOO KNEW IT WAS FOOLISH TO ATTEMPT THE JUNGLE BY NIGHT, SO PRESENTLY HE CALLED A HALT WHEN HE CONSIDERED THEY WERE COMPARATIVELY SAFE. HE EAT AND TALKED A WORKED CIRCLE OF MEN TRYING NOT TO SHOW THE ANXIETY THAT GAWED AT HIS MIND. TELLING THEM TO EAT SPARINGLY, HE REVIEWED THEIR POSITION, QUITE FRANKLY.

WELL, I WON'T WRAP IT UP, LADS -- WE'VE GOT ABOUT TWO DAYS' RATIONS LEFT AND A THIRTY MILE TREK THROUGH THE JUNGLE TO OUR OBJECTIVE.

NO MESS, I MEAN WHEN A HIGHLY TRAINED LAD HAS BEEN OUT AT NO.

DON'T LISTEN TO BARNES, SIR. WE'LL DO SOMETHING!

WITH EARS COCKED FOR THE SLIGHTEST SUSPICIOUS SOUND, THE DAUNTLESS MEN OF THE SPECIAL FORCE FORGED DOGGEDLY NORTHWARD, UP AGAINST NOT ONLY AN INVISIBLE FEROCEOUS ENEMY BUT THE JUNGLE ITSELF WITH ITS FLICKER SWAMP, ITS TEARING, GRASPING UNDERGROWTH, ITS EXHAUSTIVE, STAGNANT HEAT.

WITH THE LAST OF THEIR RATIONS LONG SINCE GONE AND FAINT WITH THIRST AND HEAT, RANSOME AND HIS MEN WERE IN A PRETTY BAD STATE WHEN TWO DAYS LATER THEY CAME UPON A CLUSTER OF HUTS.

THANK HEAVENS, A NATIVE VILLAGE!



THE NATIVES APPEARED FRIENDLY AND RANSOME WAS ABLE TO REST HIS MEN IN A HUT, CONFIDENT THAT CORPORAL CHANGI WOULD ENLIST THE HELP OF THE HEADMAN OF THE VILLAGE. RANSOME WAS SURE THAT, GIVEN TIME TO RECOVER AND TO GET PROPERLY PROVISIONED, HIS GALLANT PARTY COULD PUSH ON WITH RENEWED SPIRITS AND REACH THEIR TARGET -- THE PASS AT HOMA IN.

WE'VE BEEN BADLY HANDICAPPED THROUGH LOSING OUR RATIONS IN THE SHELLING, BUT MAYBE WE HAD ALL OUR BAD LUCK FIRST

HOW MUCH FARTHER D'YOU THINK WE HAVE TO GO?

ABOUT TWENTY MILES, YE KEN.

SETTLING DOWN FOR THE NIGHT, THE PARTY WAS STARTLED TO HEAR A RUSTLING BY THE DOOR...

WHAT THE DICKENS - WHY, IT'S A WHITE BOY!

SSH... / NOT SO LOUD!

WHEN HE CRAWLED NEARER, THEY SAW THAT IT WAS A YOUNG ENGLISH LAD OF ABOUT SIXTEEN. WHISPERING AS THOUGH FEARING EAVESDROPPERS, HE TOLD THEM HE WAS JERRY STANTON AND THAT HE HAD ESCAPED UP COUNTRY FROM THE JAPS. BUT NOW HE HAD COME TO WARN THEM ....

SIR, YOU MUSTN'T TRUST THE HEADMAN. HE WILL SELL YOU TO THE JAPS. THEY HAVE OFFERED SIXTY DOLLARS FOR EVERY BRITISH SOLDIER CAUGHT ALIVE.



YOU WILL BE SAFE TILL MORNING. YOU MUST LEAVE AT DAWN. PLEASE LET ME COME WITH YOU. I WOULD BE A GOOD SCOUT FOR YOUR MEN.

YOU CAN HARDLY REFUSE THE YOUNGSTER, SIR, CAN YOU?





WHILE THEY WAITED FOR DAYLIGHT, JERRY TOLD THEM HOW HIS PARENTS HAD ESCAPED FROM RANGOON IN THE LAST BOAT HE HAD BECOME SEPARATED IN THE PANIC AND WAS LEFT BEHIND. LUCKILY MANY OF THE VILLAGE HEADMEN HAD KNOWN HIS FATHER AND SO HE FOUND SHELTER. BUT WITH SO MANY JAPS AROUND IT WAS GETTING DANGEROUS



I AM NOT SO SURE THAT I AM SAFE WITH THIS HEADMAN, AND CERTAINLY NONE OF YOU ARE!

THANKS FOR THE TIP, JERRY. OF COURSE YOU HAVE TO JOIN US. THIS MEANS WE'LL HAVE TO SLIP AWAY WITHOUT A CHANCE TO GET PROPER FOOD FOR THE TREK. AITY!



AT DAYLIGHT JERRY LED THEM SAFELY OUT OF THE VILLAGE, BUT NOT BEFORE THEY HAD SPOTTED THE HEADMAN TALKING TO AN EVIL-LOOKING NATIVE.

SEE - THE HEADMAN IS REPORTING US TO THE JAP ARMY.

YOU WERE RIGHT, JERRY. THE MORE MILES WE CAN PUT BETWEEN US AND THIS PLACE, THE BETTER FOR US. WE MUST KEEP GOING NORTHWARDS!

THAT'S WHAT I CALL REAL HOSPITALITY.

SO ONCE MORE BOB RANSOME AND HIS PARTY PLUNGED INTO THE STIFLING JUNGLE, ALWAYS WORKING TOWARDS THEIR ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE. ORIGINALLY TO ESCAPE THE VILLAGE WITHOUT EXTRA FOOD OR DRINKING WATER, THEY HAD TO RATION THEMSELVES ON THE LITTLE THEY HAD. KEEPING CLOSE TO THE RIVER THEY MADE GOOD PROGRESS UNTIL THEY WERE THEN PAID BLOCKED BY AN ENEMY CAMP.

WE'LL WAIT TILL DARK THEN I'LL DISTRACT THEIR ATTENTION WHILE THE REST OF YOU WIP PAST BY THE RIVER.



WHEN DARKNESS FELL, RANSOME CRAWLED TOWARDS THE JAP CAMP AND HAD THE GOOD LUCK TO STRIKE A DUMP OF AMMUNITION BOXES, DOWN BY THE RIVER HIS MEN WAITED TENSELY FOR THE SIGNAL TO MAKE A DASH FOR IT.

JUST A LITTLE GUN-COTTON BETWEEN THESE AMMO BOXES AND A NICE LONG FUSE TO GIVE ME TIME TO JOIN THE LADS



LIGHTING THE FUSE, RANSOME HAD JUST TIME TO REJOIN THE OTHERS WHEN THE NIGHT WAS SPLIT BY A SHATTERING ROAR FOLLOWED BY THE SHARP CRACKS OF EXPLODING BULLETS. THE JAPS SPRANG TO THEIR FEET WITH YELPS OF FRIGHT. THIS WAS THE MOMENT!

NOW!



SCOOTING LIKE MAD THEY GAINED THE SHLTER OF THE FAR SIDE ONLY TO FIND THAT JERRY WAS MISSING.



THEN CORPORAL BARNES SAW JERRY SCUTTLING AFTER THEM WITH A BUNDLE UNDER HIS ARM.



JERRY PANTED UP TO THE RELIEVED MEN AND DISPLAYED HIS BOOTY WITH PRIDE





## Chapter 2. **AMBUSHED!**

MUCH HEARTENED BY THIS SUCCESS AND ESPECIALLY BY JERRY'S BOOTY, THE SPECIAL FORCE HED UNTIL DAYLIGHT AND THEN PRESSED ON. ONLY THE PESSIMISTIC BARNES STRUCK A GLOOMY NOTE.

I BET THOSE  
JAPS ARE ST  
WONDERING WHAT  
HIT THEM!

DON'T YOU BELIEVE IT,  
MAE. THEY'LL RUMBLE  
QUICK ENOUGH AND BE  
ON OUR TRACKS LIKE  
FIPPING JACKALS

BY THE AFTERNOON OF THE NEXT  
DAY, THEY WERE FLOUNDERING  
THROUGH EYE-SMELLING SWAMPS.  
JERRY PLODDERED MANFULLY ON,  
REFUSING TO ADMIT DEFEAT.

MIND HOW  
YOU GO,  
JERRY!

I'M ALL  
RIGHT,  
SIR

GAINING HIGHER GROUND AT LAST, RANSOME CALLED A HALT CAKED WITH FILTH AND TORMENTED BY INSECTS, THE MEN FLUNG THEMSELVES TO THE GROUND. THE SWAMP HAD TAKEN TERRIBLE TOLL OF THEIR MINDS AND THEIR STRENGTH

I'M NOT BUDGING ANOTHER INCH -- I'M FINISHED!

YOU WILL BE IF YOU STAY THERE! WE'LL CUT BACK TO THE RIVER AND TRY AGAIN WITH A BOAT, IF WE CAN FIND ONE.

ABRUPTLY, JERRY UTTERED A CRY OF DISMAY AS A JAP PATROL BURST INTO THE CLEARING. THE JAPANESE OFFICER'S PISTOL CRACKED AND STOKES CRUMPLED FORWARD, SHOT THROUGH THE HEAD. IN A FLASH, RANSOME AND HIS MEN SPRANG TO LIFE...

LOOK OUT! JAPS!

THE JAPS CAME RUSHING ON TO MEET & WITHHELD FIRE FROM THE MEN WHO HAD REACHED COVER BUT JACKSON, CAUGHT IN THE OPEN, MET A HAIL OF ENEMY BULLETS!

THEY'VE GOT JACKSON, SIR!



ANOTHER VOLLEY FROM THE STEN GUNS SILENCED THE JAPANESE PATROL FOR EVER!

AARGH!





SADLY BURYING THE BODIES OF STOKES AND JACKSON, THE LITTLE PARTY LEFT THE SITE AS QUICKLY AS THEY COULD. AFTER A SAFE DISTANCE, THEY HALTED AND MADE ROUGH CAMP FOR THE NIGHT. ALL WERE DEPRESSED AT THE LOSS OF TWO GALLANT COMPANIONS.

THE RIVER SHOULD BE JUST OVER THAT RIDGE. WE'LL REST AND EAT, AND WITH A BIT OF LUCK WE'LL MAKE IT TOMORROW!



THAT NIGHT, EVEN ROD RANSOME FELL PREY TO DESPAIR. ALL ALONG HE HAD SHOWN A BRAVE FACE TO HIS MEN BUT NOW THE SITUATION REALLY DAUNTED HIM. ADDED TO THE SHOCK OF LOSING JACKSON AND STOKES CAME THE GNAWING DOUBT AS TO WHETHER THEY WOULD SURVIVE, LET ALONE REACH THEIR GOAL -- THE RAFTS AT HOMALIN.

AT DAYLIGHT, RANSOME BRACED HIMSELF TO ENCOURAGE HIS FOOTSORE BAND ACROSS THE SWEETENING VALLEY. BY THE AFTERNOON HE WAS REWARDED BY A GLAD CRY FROM JERRY, SCOUTING AHEAD. THE BOY'S WORDS PUT FRESH HEART INTO THEM ALL.

THE RIVER!



FEELING THAT ANYTHING WAS BETTER THAN THE DEADLY JUNGLE, THEY QUICKENED PACE DOWN TO THE RIVER'S EDGE WHERE THEY FOUND JUST WHAT THEY NEEDED -- A BOAT!

BY GLORY -- A BOAT! ALL WE HAVE TO DO NOW, CHANGI, IS TO REMOVE THE JAP -- BUT QUIETLY!

I WOULD DEEM IT AN HONOUR, SAMB, TO DEAL WITH THE GENTLEMAN?



CHANGI CREEPT SOUNDLESSLY CLOSE TO THE DOZING SENTRY AND SPRANG AT HIM WITH A ROUGH CLOUCEL. INSTANTLY RANSOME DARTED FORWARD

QUICK!  
INTO THE BOAT  
AND PUSH OFF!



AS THE BOAT MOVED AWAY FROM THE BANK, RANSOME JERKED THE ENGINE INTO LIFE. THEY CHUGGED OUT INTO THE RIVER -- BUT NOT BEFORE THE JAPS HEARD THE ENGINE AND CAME RUNNING.

KEEP  
YOUR HEADS  
DOWN!

A NICE  
FRIENDLY  
SEND-OFF!



FOR SOME TIME RANSOME HUGGED THE BANK, KEEPING A SHARP LOOK OUT. MEANWHILE, THE MEN'S SPIRITS HAD BRIGHTENED, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY FOUND FOOD AND WATER ABOARD MUCH REFRESHED, THEY COULD EVEN CONSIDER THEIR OBJECTIVE MORE PURPOSEFULLY.

MUSTN'T PUSH  
OUR LUCK TOO FAR--  
BETTER HIDE UP TILL  
DARK.

I BET THE  
RIVER'S CHOCK-  
FULL OF MURDERING  
JAPS OUT LOOKING  
FOR US!

PATIENTLY THEY WAITED TILL DARK AND THEN VENTURED UP RIVER  
ONCE MORE, READY FOR ANYTHING. THEY DID NOT HAVE LONG TO WAIT.

LOOK  
BARGES. IT'S  
A PONTOON  
BRIDGE!

THE BEGINNINGS OF ONE.  
THAT MEANS THEY HAVEN'T  
STARTED THE INVASION YET  
WE STILL HAVE TIME TO  
DEAL WITH THE RAFTS!





THROTTLING BACK, RANSOME DECIDED TO WRECK THIS ENEMY ATTEMPT TO BRIDGE THE RIVER. HE REMEMBERED THE TUNIC AND CAP WHICH CHANGI HAD STRIPPED OFF THE UNOCCUPIED JAPANESE SENTRY AND AN IDEA SPANG INTO HIS MIND. TRUE, THEY HAD LOST THEIR EXPLOSIVES IN THE JUNGLE BUT THEY STILL HAD HAND GRENADES AND RANSOME INTENDED TO USE THEM TO THE BEST EFFECT.

IN THAT UNIFORM THEY WILL THINK CHANGI IS A JAP. THAT WILL ALLOW HIM TO GET THE BOAT CLOSE ENOUGH WITHOUT ROUSING SUSPICION. THEN EVERY MAN KNOWS WHAT TO DO.

A YE -- WE DO THAT, SIR!



JERRY'S HEART BEAT FAST AS CHANGI BROUGHT THE BOAT QUIETLY NEARER AND THEN OPENED UP FULL-THROTTLE. THE BOAT LEAPT FORWARD AND EVERY MAN CROUCHED READY TO TOSS A GRENADE INTO HIS ALLOTTED BARGE. JERRY HAD BEGGED TO BE ALLOWED TO ACCOUNT FOR ONE BARGE AND HIS HAND PRICKLED AT THE FEEL OF THE DEADLY LITTLE BOMB.

STAND BY!

A MACHINE GUN!



AS CHANGI SHOT THE BOAT PAST THE LINE OF BARGES EACH MAN BIT THE PIN FROM A GRENADE AND FLUNG IT IN. WHEN THE HORRIFIED JAPS SAW THE FIRST AND SECOND BARGES SPLITTING APART WITH A DRAFENING EXPLOSION, THEY SCREAMED IN ALARM AND LET FLY WITH ALL GUNS.

RIGHT --  
LET'S GET OUT  
QUICK!



BUT THE LAST BURST FROM THE MACHINE GUNNERS FOUND A MARK AND CHANGI STAGGERED BACKWARDS. RANSOME LEAPT TO THE WHEEL, WHILE FLINT CAUGHT THE FALLING BURMENSE.

CHANGI'S  
HIT!

CATCH HIM,  
FLINT, WE  
GOT THE  
WHEEL!



THE WOUNDED CHANGI STODICALLY SUFFERED A NIGHT OF PAIN WITH A BULLET LODGED IN HIS BACK. IN THE MORNING, RANSOME KNEW HE WOULD HAVE TO RISK GETTING HIM PROPER ATTENTION-- POSSIBLY FROM THE NATIVES. A SMALL GROUP OF FISHERMEN'S HUTS CAUGHT HIS ATTENTION...

LET'S  
HOPE THEY'RE  
FRIENDLY.



THEY WILL  
SURELY TAKE  
CARE OF CHANGI.  
HE IS ONE OF  
THEIR PEOPLE.

WHEN THE NERVOUS NATIVES EMERGED FROM CONCEALMENT, THEY LISTENED TO RANSOME'S STORY AND PROMISED TO TAKE CARE OF THEIR COUNTRYMAN AND HIDE HIM FROM THE JAPANESE. BUT THEY WOULD HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE BRITISH, WHOSE PRESENCE MIGHT COST THEM THEIR LIVES.

CHANGI WILL BE SAFE WITH US -- BUT YOU MUST GO -- NOW!

OKAY, FATHER -- BUT FIRST GIVE US FOOD AND WATER, THEN WE GO, QUICK.



SAYING GOOD-BYE TO THE NATIVES THE PARTY, NOW GRIEVOUSLY REDUCED, SET OFF ONCE MORE, AND AT THE LOSS OF THE DESIRED CHANGI. THEY WERE ON THE LAST STAGE OF THEIR EFFORT.



ONLY TEN MILES TO GO NOW, JERRY. WITH A BIT OF LUCK WE'LL REACH HOMALIN IN THE DARK, TONIGHT.



# Chapter 3. IN ENEMY HANDS

BUT FATE NOW DEALT A CRUEL  
PARALYSING BLOW WHICH TOOK  
THEM COMPLETELY OFF GUARD

HALT!  
SURRENDER!

BY THUNDER--  
THE JAPS!  
RUN FOR IT!

MAKING A LIGHTNING DECISION, RANSOME RESISTED  
THE IMPULSE TO RUN, AND TO HIS MEN'S HORRIFIED  
INCREUDILITY, CHOSE RATHER TO SURRENDER.

BUT IF WE  
SURRENDER  
THEY LL KILL US!

OCH, MON --  
WE CANNA MEAN  
TO GIVE IN NOW.

BETTER THAT THAN  
TO THROW AWAY OUR  
LIVES TRYING TO ESCAPE.  
WHILE WE LIVE THERE'S  
STILL HOPE OF GETTING  
TO HOMALIN -- EVEN IF  
IT IS AS PRISONERS.

IN TEN MINUTES THE SWIFT CHANGE OF FORTUNE WAS COMPLETE AND RANSOME AND HIS DISGUSTED COMPANIONS FOUND THEMSELVES THROWN AMONGST OTHER PRISONERS OF WAR IN THE STEAMER'S HOLD.

BARNES IS TELLING EVERYBODY YOU QUIT AND IT'S NOT TRUE!

IT'S SIMPLY THAT WE STAND A BETTER CHANCE THIS WAY--BUT YOU CAN'T GO AROUND TELLING EVERYBODY. OUR TARGET IS SECRET.

RANSOME WAS TAKEN ON TO THE DECK AN HOUR LATER AND PUSHED BEFORE GENERAL TOTO, THE JAPANESE COMMANDER. WHEN HE REFUSED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS, HE MET THE LITTLE TYRANT'S FURY WITH CALM DIGNITY.

JAPANESE EMPEROR NUMBER ONE -- BRITISH EMPIRE NUMBER TEN UNDERSTAND?

RANSOME WAS LED AWAY FROM  
THE FURIOUS COMMANDER WHEN  
HIS EYES MET A SHOT WHICH  
MADE HIS PULSE GO UP.

BY CRACKY-  
RAFFS! THIS  
MUST BE HONOLULU!





AS THE PRISONERS FILED DOWN THE GANGWAY, RANSOME SPOKE ANGRILY IN DEFENCE OF JERRY WHO WAS BEING PUNISHED ABOUT BY ONE OF THE GUARDS.

TELL YOUR BRUTES TO LAY OFF THE KID - HE'S A CIVILIAN!

MY SOLDIER ALL SAME SOLDIER ONE ON SPEEDO!



THAT NIGHT IT WAS A VERY THOUGHTFUL RANSOME WHO CATED THROUGH THE BARBED WIRE OF THE HUMAN PRISONER COMPOUND. NOT EVEN THE RESENTFUL BARNES COULD DISTURB THE HOPE THAT NOW ROSE WITH HIM.

I SUPPOSE YOU KNOW THE NICK NAME YOU S DO A THOSE F IF NO RAN T' YOU DO HAVE YOU'RE SATISFEE

WE'VE GOT HERE QUICKER BY SEE CLARK THAN BY ANY OTHER MEANS

BUT MON I CAN DESTROY THE KID A OR SO LON



ROD RANSOME AND HIS THREE COMPANIONS  
 WERE MARCHED OUT WITH THE OTHER  
 PRISONERS FOR RAFT BUILDING WORK.

SPEED  
 SPEED

SET TO CUT DOWN TREES UNDER  
 THE DALEFUL EYE OF THEIR GUARD  
 RANSOME AND JERRY COULD ONLY  
 CONVERSE IN LOW TONES.

THERE ARE  
 THE BASTARDS  
 JERRY - WE  
 OK WE ENOUGH  
 THEM -

TO GET INTO  
 THE CAMP WITH  
 THESE GUARDS  
 AROUND

AS THE DAYS WENT BY THE CHANCES OF ACTION SEEMED MORE REMOTE. RANSOME FOUND HIMSELF SHUNNED BY HIS FELLOW PRISONERS, FOR BARNES HAD SPREAD THE STORY OF HIS CAPTAIN'S FAINT HEARTEDNESS.

I DON'T SEEM VERY POPULAR AROUND HERE BUT UNTIL THE TIME COMES I'LL HAVE TO STICK IT OUT.

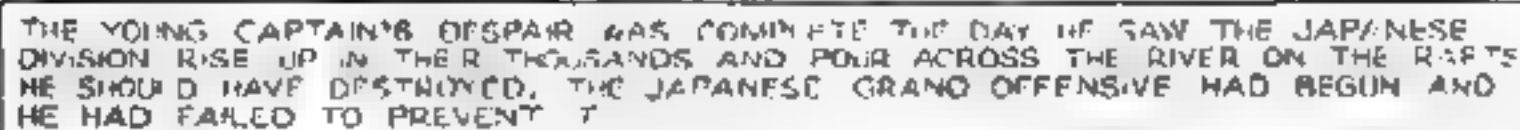


DEJECTEDLY RANSOME THOUGHT OF THE MANY LITTLE RUSES HE HAD USED IN ATTEMPTS TO GET AT THE RAFTS. BUT EACH TIME HE HAD BEEN FOILED AND THE PRISONERS NOW VIEWED HIM WITH EXTRA SUSPICION.





THE YOUNG CAPTAIN'S DESPAIR WAS COMPLETE THE DAY HE SAW THE JAPANESE DIVISION RISE UP IN THEIR THOUSANDS AND POUR ACROSS THE RIVER ON THE RAFTS HE SHOULD HAVE DESTROYED. THE JAPANESE GRAND OFFENSIVE HAD BEGUN AND HE HAD FAILED TO PREVENT IT.



IF I'D DONE  
MY JOB, JERRY,  
THIS WOULD NEVER  
HAVE HAPPENED.

YOU DID  
YOUR LEVEL  
BEST AND  
NOBODY CAN  
BLAME YOU.

SOME DAYS LATER, THE PRISONERS WERE GIVEN A FRESH JOB -- THAT OF FERRYING THE JAP WOUNDED BACK FROM THE OTHER SIDE IN THIS WAY KANSUML AND JERRY GOT A GOOD IDEA OF WHAT WAS GOING ON. SO FAR THE JAPS WERE HAVING IT NEARLY ALL THEIR OWN WAY.

GET A GOOD  
LOOK, JERRY, I  
MIGHT COME IN  
USEFUL.

NO  
TALK



SOMETIMES THERE WERE  
WOUNDED BRITISH PRISONERS,  
AND THEIR NEWS WAS BAD.

THE JAPS HAVE  
SURROUNDED IMPHAL  
WE'RE TRYING TO HOLD  
OUT...REINFORCEMENTS...



BUT AS THE DAYS MERGED INTO WEEKS RANSOME AND JERRY NOTICED THAT THE JAPS WERE SUFFERING INCREASING CASUALTIES--MANY LOOKED STARVED AND EXHAUSTED.

THIS LOT  
LOOK IN A  
PRETTY BAD  
SHAPE!

IS IT THE  
TURNING OF THE  
TIDE AT LAST,  
JERRY?

THAT NIGHT IN THE PRISON CAMP, RANSOME FELT THE TIME HAD COME TO TELL THE OTHERS WHAT WAS IN HIS MIND. BUT IF HE HOPED FOR VOLUNTEERS HE WAS DISAPPOINTED. ALL, SAVE JERRY, LAUGHED AT HIS IDEAS.

IT'S MY BELIEF THE  
BRITISH ARE DRIVING  
THE JAPS BACK INTO THE  
RIVER. IN THAT CASE  
THE JAPS WOULD WANT  
ALL THOSE RAFTS AGAIN,  
BUT NOT IF I CAN HELP  
IT WHO'LL HELP ME  
SMASH THEM?

DON'T  
MAKE ME  
LAUGH!





EVEN BARNES AND FLINT  
COULD NOT BE CONVINCED.

BUT DON'T YOU  
SEE--WITHOUT THE  
RAFTS THE JAPS  
WILL BE CUT OFF  
AND CORNERED!

SORRY, BUT  
I THINK THERE'S  
NOTHING TO STOP  
THE JAPS BASHING  
ON TO INDIA.

OCH, YOURS  
S A WILD  
DREAM.

TURNING TO HIS ONLY STAUNCH ALLY, THE LAD JERRY,  
ROD RANSOME CONFIDED HIS ALL-CONSUMING AMBITION.

JERRY--THAT JUST  
LEAVES YOU AND ME,  
I GUESS. WE'LL SMASH  
THOSE RAFTS IF T'S  
THE LAST THING  
WE DO!

WE'LL  
SMASH 'EM,  
ALL RIGHT!

## Chapter 4. **ESCAPE TO ACTION**

SOON THE JAPANESE WOUNDED WERE COMING BACK IN A STEADY STREAM. CLEARLY SOMETHING WAS GOING WRONG WITH THEIR OFFENSIVE. RANSOME, JERRY AND THE OTHERS WERE DRIVEN TO EXHAUSTION POINT FERRYING THEM FROM THE FAR SIDE, WHILE THEIR GUARDS GAVE THEM NO REST.



FINALLY WITH MORE JAP TROOPS APPEARING ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE RIVER, RANSOME CONFIDED TO JERRY THAT THE TIME HAD COME FOR ACTION. THE SOUNDS OF BATTLE WERE DAILY COMING NEARER, SIGNIFYING A GENERAL BRITISH ADVANCE.



TOMORROW NIGHT  
WE MUST TRY TO  
SLIP THROUGH THE  
GUARDS AND TAKE  
A RAFT!

THERE'S NO MOON  
SO WE OUGHT TO  
GET ACROSS THE  
RIVER WITHOUT  
BEING SEEN

THE NEXT NIGHT RANSOME AND JERRY GOT READY FOR THEIR ATTEMPT TO DESTROY THE RAFTS. THE OTHERS WATCHED THE DAUNTLESS PAIR SLIP AWAY WITH MORE HOPE THAN FAITH.



WAIT FOR SOME  
SORT OF SIGNAL TO  
STAGE A MASS  
BREAKOUT FROM  
THE PRISON



THE PAIR BEGAN THEIR  
DESPERATE BID TO REACH  
THE RIVER'S EDGE.



I'LL SETTLE  
THIS MONKEY--  
YOU GET A  
RAFT READY



RANSOME LEAPT SPENTLY UPON THE GUARD AND THROTTLED THE MAN'S SURPRISED CRY WHILE JERRY CAST LOOSE ONE OF THE SMALLER RAFTS



WITHOUT A WORD, RANSOME SPRANG ON TO THE RAFT AND THE PAIR QUIETLY MOVED OFF TOWARDS THE FAR BANK THE PROTECTING MIST SEEMED A LUCKY OMEN.



NAVIGATING BY INSTINCT, THEY PUSHED ON THROUGH THE MIST, SHIVERING WITH EXCITEMENT, JERRY WHISPERED THE QUESTION THAT HAD BEEN OCCUPYING RANSOME'S OWN MIND.

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO TACKLE ALL THOSE RAFTS?

CUT THEM LOOSE, I RECKON, UNLESS I THINK OF SOMETHING BETTER.

WHEN THEY WERE ALMOST ACROSS THEY GOT A SHOCK.

LOOK --  
A JAP  
RAFT!

TOO LATE TO  
DODGE. ACTION  
STATIONS, JERRY!



AS THE RAFTS COLLIDED, ONE OF THE STARTLED JAP SOLDIERS FELL HEADLONG INTO THE RIVER... AND JERRY AND RANSOME LEAPT ABOARD THE ENEMY CRAFT.



THE OTHER SOLDIER FELL TO HIS KNEES BEGGING FOR MERCY.

SPEAK, YOU LITTLE NIP!  
WHAT'S HAPPENING  
IN THE BIG  
BATTLE?

BRITISH  
VERY STRONG  
ALL JAPS  
RUN!



SUDDENLY THE JAP BROKE AWAY AND WHIPPED OUT HIS BAYONET, DEALING RANSOME A NASTY CUT ON THE HEAD THEN, TRYING TO AVOID JERRY'S FLAILING FISTS, HE FELL BACKWARDS INTO THE WATER.



JERRY BOUND UP RANSOME'S HEAD AS WELL AS HE COULD AND THEN INVESTIGATED THE STORES ON THE RAFT.

LOOK --  
CANS OF  
PETROL!

JERRY,  
THAT GIVES  
ME AN  
IDEA!



ALTHOUGH GIDDY WITH PAIN, RANSOME INSISTED ON TAKING A POLE...

SURE YOU  
CAN MANAGE,  
MISTER  
RANSOME?

GOT TO KEEP  
POLING, JERRY,  
OR THE CURRENT  
WILL CARRY US  
AWAY FROM  
THOSE RAFTS.



AFTER A LONG STRUGGLE THEY REACHED THE OTHER SIDE AND, AS THE MIST LIFTED, THEY SAW THE FATEFUL RAFTS SPREAD OUT LIKE A GIANT FLOATING PLATFORM. RANSOME TRIED TO COLLECT HIS REELING SENSES AND WORK OUT THE BEST METHOD FOR HIS SCHEME. FROM THE BANK CAME FANCY SOUNDS OF THE ENEMY IN FLIGHT.



WE'RE ONLY JUST IN TIME, JERRY. QUICK, LET'S GET UP-STREAM OF THOSE RAFTS, THEN I'LL TELL YOU WHAT TO DO.

THE STRUGGLE UP-STREAM AGAINST THE CURRENT ALMOST FINISHED RANSOME. BUT HE WORKED ON WITH DESPERATE STRENGTH FOR HIS IDEA TO BE SUCCESSFUL THEY HAD TO ANCHOR UP ABOVE THE RAFTS.



STICK IT, SIR-- NOT MUCH FARTHER!

WITH THEIR STRENGTH DRAINING FROM THEM, THEY AT LAST REACHED THEIR POSITION. JERRY MADE FAST WHILE RANSOME SAT DOWN WEAKLY TO SURVEY THE COUNTLESS RAFTS NOW DOWN-STREAM OF THEM.



THAT'S FINE, JERRY-- BUT I FEEL TOO GROGGY TO MOVE.

DON'T WORRY--JUST TELL ME WHAT TO DO!



WHILE HANSOME PAINTFULLY JERKED OUT HIS WORDS,  
JERRY PUT THE DARING SCHEME INTO ACTION.

POUR THOSE  
CANS OF PETROL  
INTO THE WATER BUT  
SAVE ENOUGH TO  
SOAK THIS OTHER  
RAFT AS WELL.

OKAY!



OVER AT BRITISH HEADQUARTERS,  
THE COMMANDING OFFICER'S MAIN  
CONCERN WAS THE OVERTAKING OF  
THE FLEEING ENEMIES.

IF ONLY WE COULD CATCH  
TOTO AND HIS LITTLE SO-  
AND-SO'S BEFORE THEY HAVE  
A CHANCE TO NP BACK  
OVER THE RIVER...



IT WOULD MEAN THE TOTAL  
DESTRUCTION OF A WHOLE DIVISION  
OF THE JAP IMPERIAL ARMY. BUT I'M  
AFRAID THAT ONLY A LARGE SCALE  
OBSTACLE WILL PREVENT THEM ESCAPING US.

MEANWHILE GENERAL TOTO AND HIS STAFF WERE HAVING A BAD TIME AS THEY RACED TO THE RIVER WITH THE PANIC-STRICKEN JAP ARMY.



AS THE JAPS FLED TOWARDS THE RAFTS WHICH THEY FONDLY BELIEVED WOULD GIVE THEM ESCAPE JERRY EMPTIED SEVERAL GALLONS OF PETROL INTO THE WATER AND THEN BEGAN ON THE OTHER RAFT.

NOW I'LL  
SLOSH PETROL  
ALL OVER THIS  
RAFT BOY, WHAT  
A NIGHT!

I HAVEN'T  
GOT A MATCH,  
BUT THIS BATTERY  
SHOULD GIVE US  
A SPARK!

THE PETROL FLOATED DOWN STREAM, SEEPING  
OMNIOUSLY AMONG THE RAFTS.

THIS BATTERY  
GIVES A GOOD  
SPARK--NOW  
FOR IT!

RANSOME WAS READY TO IGNITE THE PETROL-SOAKED RAFT.

GET READY TO SHOVE HER OFF THE MOMENT SHE FLARES UP.



WITH A TERRIBLE ROAR THE RAFT BURST INTO FLAME, AND JERRY AND RANSOME SET IT ON ITS COURSE OF DESTRUCTION ...

WOW!

THERE SHE GOES!





AS RANSOME HAD FORESEEN, THE FERCELY BURNING RAFT WAS CARRIED SWIFTLY DOWN-RIVER TOWARDS THE MASS OF JAPANESE RAFTS, AND THE NEXT SECOND, CRIES OF ALARM RANG OUT FROM THE ENEMY SOLDIERS ON THE RIVER BANK...



THE RAFT OF FLAME COLLIDED WITH THE OTHER CRAFT. AT THE SAME INSTANT THE FLOATING PETROL IGNITED WITH A TERRIBLE ROAR /



ALMOST AT ONCE, THE REST OF THE PETROL LURKING AMONGST THE RAFTS BLEW UP, TOO, AND UNDER A BILLOWING CLOUD OF BLACK SMOKE RED, SEARING FLAMES BIT THEIR WAY INTO THE WOODEN BOATS...



FLUNG INTO SCREAMING CONFUSION, THE JAPS SEEMED ROBBED OF THEIR WITS, AND AS THE LEAPING FLAMES SET LIGHT TO TREES AND FOLiage ON THE RIVER BANK, THEY FLED INTO THE JUNGLE...



THE PANDEMONIUM AND THE GLOW OF THE FLAMES GAVE THE WAITING PRISONERS IN THE P.O.W. CAMP ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE RIVER ALL THE SIGNAL THEY NEEDED.



FEAR / GRIP AND THE JAP SENTRIES AS THEY  
LOOKED UP AT THE FLAME-FILLED SKY, AND  
THEN THEY WERE FLUNG ASIDE AS, LIKE A  
GIANT RATTING RAM, THE HORDE OF  
PRISONERS WEDGED THEMSELVES THROUGH  
THE GATES OF THE PRISON CAMP

LEAVE ME  
FOR ME!

SCRAM  
THE  
GUARDS!



WITH THE PRISON GATES FORCED ASIDE, THERE WAS NO STOPPING THE EXULTANT MEN SENT ON REVENGE FOR MONTHS OF MISERY AND HARSH TREATMENT.



BACK ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER, GENERAL TOTU AND HIS STAFF TOTTERED ON BREATHLESSLY TOWARDS THE RIVER BANK, WHERE THEY HOPED THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO GET AWAY BY RAFTS AND ESCAPE THE RAPIDLY ADVANCING BRITISH.





RAISONNE AND JERRY SURVEYED THEIR HANDIWORK WITH PRIDE. BY NOW THE WHOLE MASS OF RAFTS WERE CRACKLING FIERCELY IN THE CONSUMING BLAZE.



BACK AT THE CAMP IT WAS THE HOT "A VENGEANCE" IN NO TIME AT ALL THE "L" WAS REALLY ON!



THE DISMAY OF THE JAPANESE HIGH COMMAND SPREAD LIKE THE FLAMES THAT NOW MET THEIR HORRIFIED EYES.



THE DESPAIRING GENERAL GAPED AT THE INFERNO BELOW KNOWING THAT ESCAPE WAS NOW IMPOSSIBLE. THEY WERE DOOMED TO DESTRUCTION BY THE PURSUING BRITISH FORCES.



THE SCORCHING WALL OF FLAME THREW BACK THE FRANTIC JAPS, WHO DESPERATELY TRIED TO REACH SOME RAFTS NOT YET DEVOURD BY THE FIRE.



AS THEY GAZED ON THE AWESOME SCENE, RANSOME FELT EXHILARATED YET HUMBL Y THANKFUL FOR THE SUCCESS OF HIS SCHEME. IT SEEMED TO ATONE SOMEWHAT FOR HIS EARLIER FAILURE.



ON THE OTHER SIDE THE EX PRISONERS WATCHED IT ALL WITH DELIRIOUS JOY. IT MEANT A JAP DEFEAT. SOON THE BRITISH WOULD COME!

NOW THE PERISHERS WILL HAVE TO TAKE WHAT'S COMING TO 'EM!



IN THEIR DELIGHT BARNES AND FLINT FORGOT THEIR HARD FEELINGS TOWARDS THEIR LEADER AND CALLED FOR CHEERS.

I BET CAPTAIN RANSOME DID THAT—AND YOUNG JERRY!

GIVE THEM A REET GOOD CHEER, LAADS!

YOOHOO!



GUIDED BY THE FLAMES THE BRITISH COUNTER-OFFENSIVE PRESSED RELENTLESSLY ON, CRUSHING ALL OPPOSITION AND GIVING THE CRUMBLING JAPANESE NO REST. IT WAS A ROUT!





THE BRITISH MORTAR FIRE DIRECTED ON TO THE JAPANESE-HELD STRIP WAS DEVASTATING.



AS A STRAY MORTAR SHELL LANDED NEAR THE RAFT, RANSOME AND JERRY DECIDED IT WAS TIME THEY MOVED...

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, JERRY!

IT'S GETTING TOO HOT FOR ME, AND I DON'T MEAN JUST THE FLAMES!



SUCCESS SEEMED TO REVIVE RANSOME, AND THEY MADE GOOD PROGRESS BACK. JERRY POINTED EXCITEDLY.

LOOK! THE LADS BROKE CAMP!



AND THEY'RE ALL ALONG THE SHORE -- CHEERING LIKE MAD. THEY'RE CHEERING YOU, SIR!

## Special Force Burma

AS RANSOME AND JERRY STANTON STEPPED ASHORE FROM THE RAFT, THE EXCITED AND CHEERING EX PRISONERS, LED BY BARNES AND FLINT, SURGED FORWARD TO GREET THEM ...


YOU DID IT, BY GOLLY!

OCH! BUT YE DID WELL, LADDIE!

BY THE FOLLOWING AFTERNOON THE JAP DIVISION HAD SURRENDERED TO THE ADVANCING BRITISH FORCES, AND RANSOME MET UP WITH COLONEL PINDER WHOSE SPECIAL FORCE HAD PLAYED A BIG PART IN THE ACTION.


RANSOME -- IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU! I BET THAT LITTLE BLAZE WAS YOUR DOING.

YES, AND I'VE BRAVE AND AILED HERE STANTON



COLONEL PINDER, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET A YOUNG HERO. BUT FOR HIM I COULDN'T HAVE FIRED THE RAFTS.

WELL, BLESS ME -- WE'LL HAVE TO THINK OF SOME PROPER MILITARY RECOGNITION!



SUDDENLY, ROUND THE BEND IN THE RIVER CAME A NATIVE SAMPAN, AND WHO SHOULD BE IN IT, WAVING JOYFULLY, BUT CHANGI, LOOKING AS FIT AS EVER.

LOOK, IT'S CHANGI! HIS PEOPLE HAVE SENT HIM BACK!

HO, THERE, SAHIB, S R! IT'S CHANGI -- WHO IS VERY MUCH VERY WELL, THANK YOU!

WONDERFUL, CHANGI!



CHANGI SPRANG ASHORE FOR A JOYFUL REUNION.

CHANGI! I'M CERTAINLY GLAD TO SEE YOU ALIVE!

SAHIB, MY PEOPLE HID ME WITH GREAT CUNNING. NOW THEY REJOICE THE BRITISH ARE VICTORIOUS!

THE NEXT MORNING THE BRITISH COMMANDER AND HIS STAFF ARRIVED AND HEARD FROM COLONEL PINDER THE STORY OF THE BLAZING RAFTS WHICH HAD CUT OFF THE RETREAT OF THE JAP DIVISION. AFTER WARMLY THANKING ROD RANSOME, THE GENERAL TURNED TO JERRY.

JERRY STANTON-- FOR SPECIAL SERVICE OF GREAT GALLANTRY TO YOUR KING AND COUNTRY, I AWARD YOU THIS BADGE FROM MY OWN HAT. HOW'S THAT, EH?

I THINK HE'S TOO OVERCOME TO SPEAK, SIR.





A FEW DAYS LATER, THE ELATED BRITISH TROOPS BEGAN THEIR VICTORIOUS RE-CROSSING OF THE CHINDWIN RIVER. THEIR BITTER RETREAT HAD TURNED AT LAST TO A FRESH UPSURGE OF EFFORT AND TRIUMPH, TO RENEWED DOMINION OVER THE ENEMY AND TO ULTIMATE VICTORY IN THE BURMA CAMPAIGN.



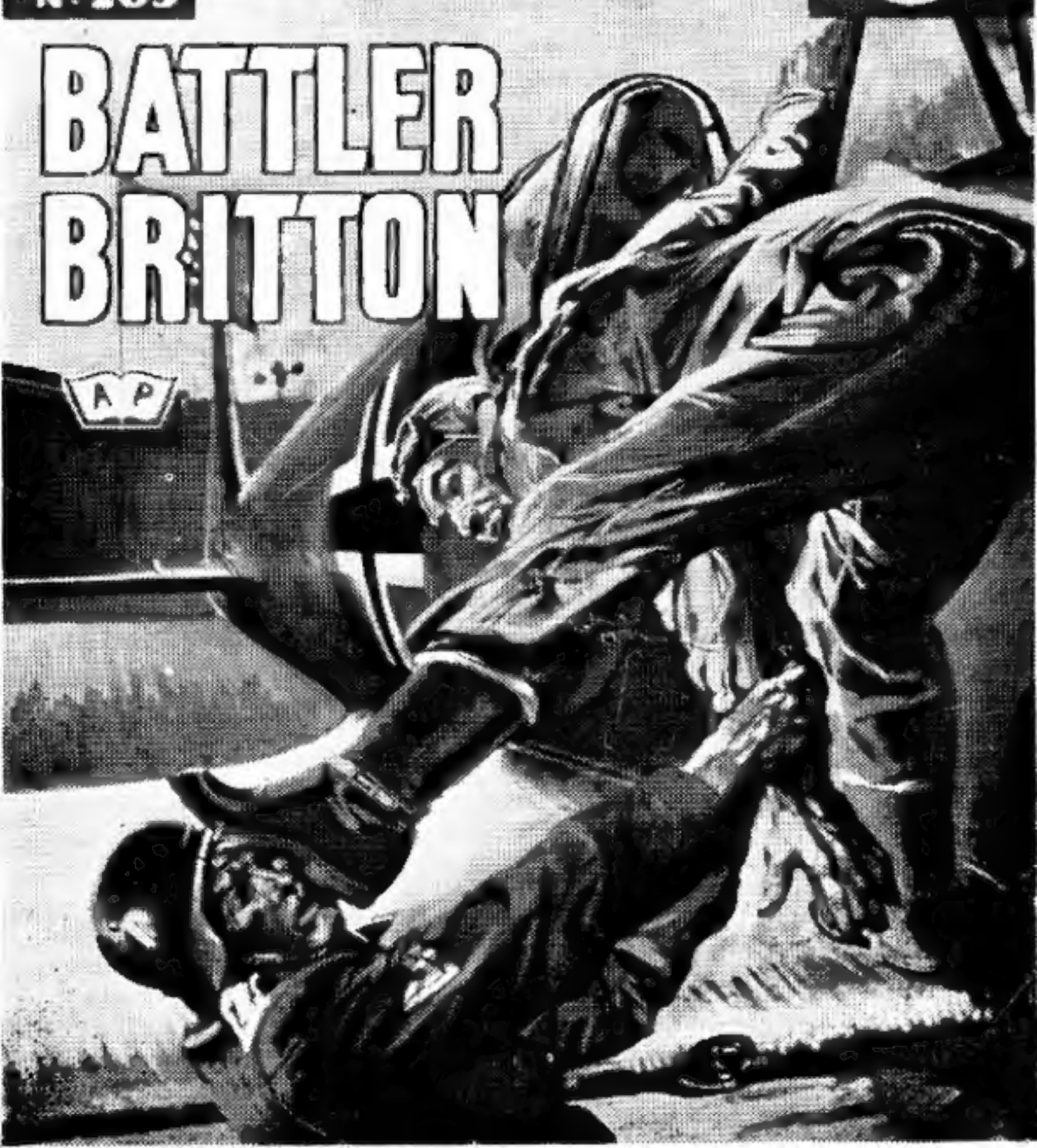
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